

Times 10

Your Magazine of Choice

Vol 5, Number 2, October 1997

David
Garber
& EVM
Page 8



AIDS

We're
all
affected.

Politics

Pg's 5, 14 & 20

Identity

Pg's 10, 16, & 23

Fun

Pg's 9, 19

HALLOWEEN NIGHT

Flamingo
Megas
Vegas

"... don't miss it"

BOOTS

Details to be announced saturday oct. 11 11:00 p.m.

Café de Ville

“Mediocrity knows nothing higher than itself but talent instantly recognizes genius.”

- A.C. Doyle

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YOUR MAGAZINE OF CHOICE
Vol. 5 Number 2
October, 1997
Edmonton, Alberta

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Times .10 Magazine
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada
Times .10 Publications Non-Profit Society

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FYI: News & Notes from the HIV/AIDS Battlefront

"A Revolution in AIDS Drugs Excludes the Tiniest Patients"

New York Times

While protease inhibitors have revolutionized AIDS care, transforming the disease from a terminal illness to an almost manageable chronic disease, children largely have been excluded from the drugs' benefits. While some children are receiving the new drugs in experiments; and others, off-label, the medications are not approved for use in children under age two. This is especially tragic, say scientists, because evidence suggests the drugs are most effective early in the course of infection and children are the only population where physicians can pinpoint the date of infection. "Of all the patients, they should be benefiting the most," says Arthur Ammann, president of the American Foundation for AIDS Research.

"Baseline HIV-1 Levels After Seroconversion Predict Long-term Mortality"

Reuters Health Information Services

The concentration of HIV-1 RNA in a person's blood shortly after infection may be an indicator of the virus' future rate of progression, according to a recent study from Canada. The study, published in September's *Journal of Infectious Diseases*, analyzed HIV-1 RNA levels of 79 HIV-positive gay men from seven months after seroconversion for up to 11.5 years. The University of British Columbia in Vancouver team found that after 11.5 years, 69 percent of those who started with higher levels of HIV-1 RNA had developed AIDS, with 61 percent mortality. Out of those with lower baseline viral loads, however, 34 percent had developed AIDS, with 27 percent mortality.

"Women Are Left Out of Hunt for AIDS Drugs"

New York Times

In a letter to the editor of the *New York Times*, City University of New York Professor Maxine Wolfe contends that the effect of AIDS drugs on women has been researched inadequately. Women make up 26 percent of AIDS patients in the United States, Wolfe notes, yet research into the disease has been done primarily on white men. The author points out that hormonal differences cause women to absorb drugs into their bodies at different rates than men. In order to benefit from the new drug combinations, women need more information about dosing and

toxicity based on research conducted with women, Wolfe concludes.

"National Minority AIDS Council Announces New Web Site Focusing on U.S. Conference on AIDS"

National Minority AIDS Council
The National Minority AIDS



Council has launched a new World Wide Web site, located at www.uscaids.org, that highlights the group's upcoming United States Conference on AIDS. The conference, to be held in Miami Beach Sept. 18-21, will focus on advances in treatment, successes and failures in prevention, and the spread of HIV among people of color, women, and the poor. Specifically, the forum will offer 12 daylong institutes, 16 half-day seminars, and more than 130 workshops on HIV prevention, treatment, care, public policy, and fundraising and management issues that face AIDS groups throughout the United States. Other organizations helping to present the conference include AIDS, Medicine & Miracles; AIDS National Interfaith Network; LIFEbeat; National Task Force on AIDS Prevention; and the Red Hot Organization. NMAC's permanent home page is located at www.nmac.org.

"About 3,000 Test HIV-Positive in Russia in 1997"

Itar Wire Service

In this year alone, some 2,985 people have tested HIV-positive in Russia, raising the total number of known infections to 5,550. The snowballing figures are primarily the result of shared drug paraphernalia, according to the Health Ministry's Department of Sanitation and Epidemiologic Oversight. Kaliningrad has recorded the largest number of HIV infections by far, with 1,656 cases; followed by Krasnodar, 873; Moscow and Moscow region, 593; Tver, 383; Rostov-on-Don, 373; and Nizhny Novgorod, also 373.

"CCR-5 Delta Heterozygosity Slows Progression to AIDS"

Reuters Health Information Services

A new study published in the September issue of AIDS suggests that HIV-1-infected patients with CCR-5 delta 32 Heterozygosity will experience a slower early HIV-1 progression. Dr. Laurence Meyer from Hospital de Bicetre in Le Kremlin-Bicetre, France, and other members of the French SEROCO study

group, evaluated 412 Caucasians, including 93 women. The team discovered that the slower progression among those patients who were heterozygous for the CCR-5 delta 32 deletion occurred mainly in the first seven years after HIV-1 seroconversion. The researchers also noted that the heterozygote subjects were not as likely to develop *Pneumocystis carinii* pneumonia or toxoplasmosis as an AIDS-defining illness.

"Female AIDS Cases Are Rising Swiftly"

Washington Post

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that the number of women diagnosed with AIDS in the United States increased 63 percent between 1991 and 1995. A total of 67,400 women had been diagnosed with AIDS by year-end 1995, accounting for nearly 20 percent of the total number of AIDS cases nationwide. The study, published in the current issue of the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, noted that the greatest increase was among women who contracted HIV through heterosexual contact. "Young women are at risk for HIV infection at an earlier age than young heterosexual men. ... Adolescent women are becoming infected by older sexual or needle-sharing partners," the report said.

"U.N. Survey Says Corporate Awareness of AIDS Rises"

Reuters

The United Nations Joint Program on HIV/AIDS published a study earlier this week stating that almost 75 percent of large Western corporations have enacted measures to help reduce the risk of HIV infection on the job. In addition, 70 percent have set up medical leave benefits and assistance programs for

HIV-positive employees. Of the 203 European and US-based firms responding to the survey, about half said their motive for installing such programs was employee welfare, while a third cited safety. The report did not include details as to the percentage of contributions to AIDS programs in corporate budgets, the economic costs of AIDS, or whether the disease plays a part in employment and hiring practices.

NOTICE OF OPENINGS

gay men:
relationships with
family, friends, foes

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Call: 910 3050
Liz Massiah, msw, rsw
Keith Turton, m.ed

THE FRONT PAGE

NEWSPAPERS & MAGAZINES

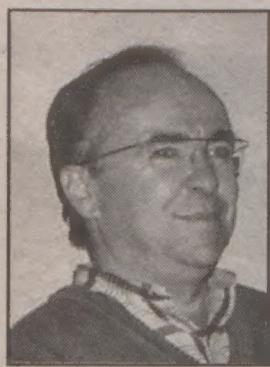
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Capital City Politics



END OF SUMMER THOUGHTS

By City Councillor Michael Phair

As the summer of 1997 comes to a close, an Edmonton summer that I generally quite enjoyed, I decided to write about three very different topics for this autumn issue of *Times.10*.

Although not a follower of the Royal family I was both completely unprepared for and transfixed by the public reaction to the untimely death of Princess Diana. I wondered and still wonder how the life and death of one woman from England was able to bring so many people together in grief and appreciation of her short life.

My only personal reaction to and appreciation of Princess Diana came in the mid-1980's when she made her first visit to persons with AIDS. At the time this was a daring and courageous act that received worldwide attention. I was the Chair of Edmonton's AIDS Network Society and on the Board of the Canadian AIDS/SIDA Society. Locally we were still dealing with some medical and hospital personnel who would not treat persons with AIDS and would not clean their hospital rooms or bring food trays into their rooms. I also remember that with the Canadian AIDS/SIDA Society Board I participated in a meeting with the then Minister of Health, Jake Epp. It had taken months to set up this meeting with the Minister who nearly freaked when we talked of and pulled out packages of condoms in his office and suggested that there needed to be a national program promoting the use of condoms! And then, a short time later out of the blue came the international pictures and stories of Princess Diana sitting and talking with persons with AIDS. This act of hers undermined the public fear and inaction that was rampant—dealing with AIDS in the public realm changed dramatically!

I would like to think that this is why so many people admired Diana—a woman who was able to take risks and deal with marginalized people and unpopular issues like AIDS.

And now onto a city issue—Edmonton Transit! Over the past 5 years that I have been on City Council I have worked hard to try not to cut bus services but in fact to improve transit and keep transit fares down. In June the City introduced a revised system called Horizon 2000. The new system consists of a 'base' network of core routes that operate everyday of the year with 30

minute or better scheduling and a 'community' network of routes designed to meet the needs of riders in a local or community area. In September Transit made a number of changes to improve the new system.

I know that many lesbian/gay people use Transit. I am anxious to hear from you about our new system—is it better? Are there problems? What can be done to improve the system? City Council will soon be debating the 1998 budget and there may be proposals to reduce service or increase fares and it is important that I know what those of you who ride the system think!

And finally I must bring up the renewed and hateful attacks on lesbians, gay men, bisexuals and transgendered people emanating from the Provincial government. Now it is lesbian foster parents, gay history in Red Deer and a writer and publisher of a book of poetry that are viciously attacked! There is no excuse for these vicious attacks. Speak out! This is our city and our province. Each of us can make a difference.

Michael Phair, Councillor, Ward 4
Contact Councillor Phair's Office at 496-8146 (ph), 496-8113 (fax), or by e-mail mphair@gov.edmonton.ab.ca



Klein Ducks Fall Sitting to Avoid Heat for Narrow-minded Agenda

by Pam Barrett
Leader, Alberta New Democrats

Let's be clear. There is a reason why the Legislature is not sitting this fall. The Klein government is afraid to be held accountable by the people of this province for their wrong-minded policies.

In the last 12 months the Alberta Legislature has sat fewer days than any other province in Canada. Since last September, there have only been 38 sitting days. (Actually, that is tied with New Brunswick, but they are sitting later this fall). 38 in 365 days and counting. It is a poor record. Time to

get back to work.

But Klein refuses to do it. And I know why. Here is just a partial list:

- The Vriend Case is being heard on November 4 and 5.
- The Ms. T. Cases continues to be an important issue.
- Canada's first private, for-profit hospital is slated to open in Calgary this fall.
- Profits are up. Wages are not. As a result, labour/management unrest is growing.
- Unbudgeted surpluses topping \$1.2 billion while cutbacks continue.

He knows if he gives us an opportunity, we will make sure he feels heat on all of these issues. As will thousands of Albertans fed up with a narrow-minded government driven by blind ideology. So, surprise, surprise — no fall sitting.

So, I say let's make him feel the heat on all the above issues, plus the fact he is hiding from public scrutiny.

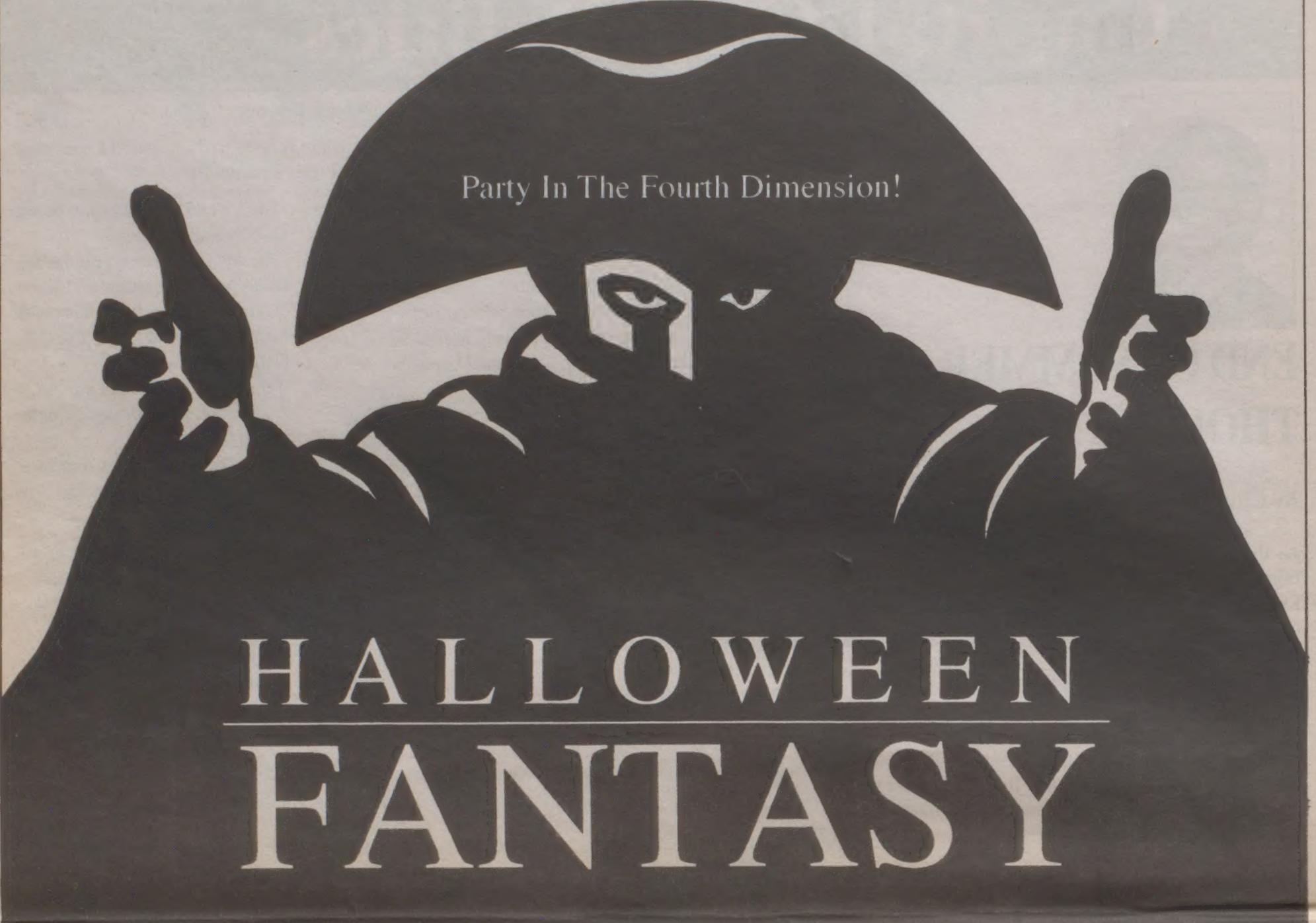
Klein has floated the idea of calling the Legislature in December to pass a resolution on National Unity. It is good Alberta's democratically elected officials will get together to help preserve our country. But we should be doing more than that. There are enough issues needing attention that we should be back at work under the Dome.

I suggest Albertans should be inundating the Premier's office with calls and letters. We need to call for a fall sitting, but not just for a fall sitting. We need to call for a sitting, which deals with amending the Individual Rights Protection Act, changing foster parent policy and dealing with many other issues that matter to Albertans.

As for me and my fellow New Democrat MLA, Raj Pannu (Edmonton Strathcona), we will keep hammering away at these and other issues — session or no session.

(Remember: AIDS Awareness Week September 29th to October 5th)

Times.10 welcomes expression of opinion from its readers. Please keep letters as short as possible. We reserve the right to edit all letters as necessary. Letters must be signed and include the home address and telephone number of the writer. The writer's name can be withheld if so requested. Publication of the name or photograph of any person or organization in articles or advertising in *Times.10* is not to be construed as any indication of the sexual orientation of such person or organization. All material in this publication is copyrighted and must not be reproduced without permission from *Times.10*. The only exception to the copyright is the material from National AIDS Clearing house which may be duplicated with appropriate credit given.



Party In The Fourth Dimension!

HALLOWEEN FANTASY

Saturday, November 1, 1997

Strathcona Arts Barns

10330- 84 Avenue

Doors creak open at 9:00 pm.

**The Dungeon and Haunted Maze!
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See the fantasy...Live the fantasy...

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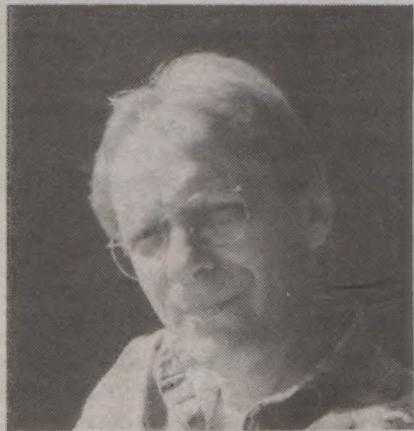
Presented by

EVM Edmonton Vocal Minority



From the Editor

by Dennis Cambly



What a strange life we live, huddled in our respective corners, no one wishing to make the first move. Our friends are still getting sick and some are near death's door, and only a few step forward to do something. Is it really hatred or just plain and ugly fear that keeps those doors closed? It

appears that in this world today it is much easier to place the blame on others, rather than look into our own hearts for the answers. We now rely on computer animated graphics to type a simple message to someone we care about. What about getting down and dirty; face to face with the person with whom you wish to speak? It would seem much simpler than sending dirty messages via the grapevine. If you wish to prove the point do the following exercise, it will only take a minute or two of your precious time. Sit with four friends and whisper a message into the ear of the person sitting next to you. Have that person do exactly the same until it comes back to you. State clearly the message you originally spoke and then repeat the final one you heard. Imagine then what happens to a message sent through a crowded room with noise and activity going on all around. This is what we are doing to ourselves every time we pass on the blame to others in our community. Take a good look in the mirror and then ask yourself who is to blame for whatever circumstances you have brought upon yourself.

Over the years we have done our best to create a community that will work and play together here at Times .10 magazine. We set ourselves up as a non-profit publication for several very good reasons. The editorial discretion is right here and not in the hands of those who fund this publication. We do not have to plunder through our community giving full-page stories to someone just because they advertise. Nor do we have to be "fashionable" by allowing thieves to advertise products to which they hold no rights to sell. We need not make claims about a vast circulation that does not exist because our primary mandate is to serve the city of Edmonton. You see, this is our home and we are very proud of it, for all its' problems, there is without a doubt some of the finest people in the world living here. Back when we first got together and talked about putting Times .10 on the market we knew that it was not going to be an easy task. Over the past year we have had some unnerving times with each new magazine. It is not a matter of what to print, as we are now several issues in advance of material being submitted. You see, like any non-profit organization we are not here for our own ego gratification. We are here to serve and talk up every kind of person who walks throughout our community. In our very first issue we said that we would continue to war on HIV and AIDS until there is a cure or vaccine. So, once again this year we asked who in our community would assist us with the No Name fund-raiser. Metropolitan Community Church were the ones who prepared hampers three years ago. They were able to put together a few hampers for people living with HIV and AIDS. Last year we put together some seed money and ran the fund-raiser which ended with just under fifty hampers for the cause. This year we want to double that number through the kindness found in your hearts. Four venues will be co-operating this year: The Rebar, 109 Discotheque, Boots and Jazzberry's Too. This is the wonderful gift that we seek within our community. Do what you know is best on Saturday, October 18th and help us give a gift to someone who has no name.

GLCCE Community Calendar!

Community Events

Saturday, Sept. 27 at 7 p.m.

Wine Appreciation Evening
Rossdale House Social Room 9825 - 103 Street
We've invited a professional to teach us about basic wine regions and their history along with a "sensory lesson" in wine. Min./Max. People 15/20 Payment deadline is Sept. 20 Cost: \$25 An OUT & Out Affiliated Outing. Have you renewed your \$5 yearly membership yet? Tel: Mark at 428-3375

Sunday, September 28

AIDS WALK EDMONTON

Kinsmen Park

Registration has started for the Walk which will benefit the AIDS Network, Living Positive, Feather of Hope and the Interfaith Association on AIDS. Please register ASAP! Tel: Suzanne at 488-5742

Thursday, October 2 at 8 p.m.

Lighter Classics Series, Edmonton Symphony Orchestra Meet at the Francis Winspear Centre at 7:40 p.m. in the lobby. Please RSVP ASAP. Cost: \$19 An OUT & Out Affiliated Outing. Have you renewed your \$5 yearly membership yet? Tel: Jayne at 451-2924 to find out where to meet prior to the play.

Saturday, Oct. 28

No Name Fund-raiser III

To be held at the following venues
Boots, 109 Discotheque, The Rebar and Jazzberry's TooCafe. Entertainment at all places for the evening. All proceeds will go to a Christmas fund for people living with HIV & AIDS. This event is sponsored by Times .10 Publications Society and Lyon's Empire

Saturday, Oct. 18 at 11 a.m.

Paintball at Ultimatic Adventure (35 minutes east of Edmonton) Play paintball with your friends for about 5 hours. The game will go rain or snow or shine. Booking in advance is essential. Minimum players: 8 REGISTRATION DEADLINE IS OCT. 4 Deposit of \$10 is required. Cost: Approx. \$28 per person. An OUT & Out Affiliated Outing. Have you renewed your \$5 yearly membership yet? Tel: Darren at 489-1360

Saturday, Oct. 26 at 11:30 a.m.

Indoor Rock Climbing Introductory Course at Vertically Inclined Rock Gym (VIRG) 8523 Argyll Road

Wear comfortable work-out type clothes (no jeans). Bring extra pairs of thin socks. PAYMENT DEADLINE IS OCT. 22 Cost: \$40 An OUT & Out Affiliated Outing. Have you renewed your \$5 yearly membership yet?

E-mail: rgriffit@gpu.srv.ualberta.ca Tel: Ron Griffith at 428-3375

Continuing Events

Sundays

Arctic FrontRunners at 10:00 a.m.

New members are always welcome. We run for 45 min. to 1 hour. We meet outside the locker rooms in the Van Vilet Physical Education Centre on the U of A campus. Runners of all skill levels welcome. Please call to make sure we find you before we go. An OUT & Out Affiliated Group. Have you renewed your \$5 yearly membership yet? Tel: 403-436-7892 (Ask for Bill)

River Valley Cyclists at 2 p.m.

For our cycling LesBiGay community members and their friends! We are rated for the novice and the long distance rider. Mountain bikes work best but there is no problem with regular street bicycles. Meet at the lookout at the end of 103st and Saskatchewan Drive. Tel: 403-988-6402 (Mike) E-mail: mrced@planet.con.net

Prime Timers (Edmonton Chapter)

Social group for gay / bisexual men over 40 and their friends. Monthly meeting (EXCEPT July & August), usually with a guest speaker, second Sunday of the month at 3:00 p.m. at the Unitarian Church at 12530 110 Ave. Also bridge group, video/discussion group, dining out.

potluck & pub nights. E-mail: mercury@planet.con.net (Ron) Tel: 403-426-7019 (Peter)

Metropolitan Community Church.

Services are held every Sunday at 7:15 p.m. at McDougall United Church. E-mail: Charles.Bidwell@UAlberta.Ca www: http://www.ualberta.ca/~cbidwell/UFMCC/mcc-ed.htm Tel: 403-429-2321

Lambda Christian Community Church.

Services are held every Sunday at 7 p.m. at Garneau United Church Tel: 403-988-3913

Mondays

Outreach

Outreach is a University of Alberta based group for

students, staff and faculty. For meeting details contact Outreach. E-mail: outreach@gpu.srv.ualberta.ca www: http://www.ualberta.ca/~outreach/ Tel: 403-988-4166

Rollerblading at 6:30 p.m.

Meet in the parking lot of Government House Park on the North river bank West of Groat Road bridge) An OUT & Out Affiliated Group. Have you renewed your \$5 yearly membership yet? Tel: Kevin at 438-0120 or Jeff at 439-9803 E-mail: mcagley@aol.com

Tuesdays

Fun Recreational Volleyball League

Starts Sept. 30 6 to 8 p.m. Grandin School at 9844 - 110 Street Excluding all of December and January Cost: \$10 for the season plus extra for coaching if you want it. Tel: Darcy at 454-0879

Group Movie Night (The early Show)

Make the most of cheap movie night and join this group. Phone to find out what movie, when to meet and where (varies between the Princess Theatre, Westmount & Eaton Centre). Cost: \$5 - 8 An OUT & Out Affiliated Group. Have you renewed your \$5 yearly membership yet? Tel: Kent at 454-0313

PFLAG and TGS-PFLAG

Parents, Families & Friends of Lesbians and Gays and Transgendered Support. PFLAG promotes health and well-being through support, education and advocacy. They meet the third Tuesday of every month. Tel: 403-944-1394 box 3524 E-mail: showrish@compusmart.ab.ca

Wednesdays

Querries from 5 to 5:30 p.m.

Check-out this current affairs radio show on CJSR 88.5 FM

Gay Mens' Coffee Evenings at 7:30 p.m. Breadstick Cafe at 10159 - 82 Avenue. Join them for casual chats and social events. E-mail: gwatts@freenet.edmonton.ab.ca Recreational Volleyball League from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Free *To* Be Volleyball Association Donnan School, 79 Avenue & 87 Street No regular commitment required. An OUT & Out Affiliated Group. Have you renewed your \$5 yearly membership yet? E-mail: rgriffit@gpu.srv.ualberta.ca Tel: 403-988-3132

Thursdays

River Valley Cyclists at 7:00 p.m.

For our cycling LesBiGay community members and their friends! We are rated for the novice and the long distance rider.

Mountain bikes work best but there is no problem with regular street bicycles. Meet at the lookout at the end of 103st and Saskatchewan Drive. Tel: 403-988-6402 (Mike) E-mail: mrced@planet.con.net

Illusions Social Club

Join Illusions at GLCCE on the second Thursday of every month at 8 p.m.

Adamant Eve

A radio show for and by womyn on CJSR 88.5 FM from 5:30 to 6:00 p.m.

Gaywire

Gaywire follows Adamant Eve on CJSR 88.5 FM from 6 to 7:00 p.m.

Fridays

Northern Chaps

Edmonton's Leather-fetish club for gay, lesbian and straight men and women meets at Boots & Saddle the first & third Friday of every month from 9 p.m. to midnight. E-mail: mcewen@freenet.edmonton.ab.ca

Birds of a Feather Badminton

Will be back in October. Call Frank for more details! An OUT & Out Affiliated Group. Have you renewed your \$5 yearly membership yet? Tel: 403-990-1696 (Frank)

Saturdays

River Valley Cyclists at 4:00 p.m.

For our cycling LesBiGay community members and their friends! We are rated for the novice and the long distance rider.

Mountain bikes work best but there is no problem with regular street bicycles. Meet at the lookout at the end of 103st and Saskatchewan Drive. Tel: 403-988-6402 (Mike) E-mail: mrced@planet.con.net

Nothern Titans International Bowling League

Meets every Saturday at 5:15 p.m. at Pins & Cues Bowling & Billiards Centre, Southeast corner of Westmount Shopping Centre, 111 ave & 135 st. COST: \$12 A group supper outing is organized each week after bowling. Tel: Paul Grecette at 403-456-0851 or Karen Kurylo at 403-432-7759

Sonic Sistas

Sonic Sistas is a radio show on CJSR 88.5 FM from 7 to 8:00 p.m.

Gay and Lesbian Community Centre of Edmonton

Tel: 403-488-3234 (M-F, 7-10 p.m.)
Tel: 403-988-4018 (24 hr. Info. Line)
http://freenet.edmonton.ab.ca/glcc
glcc@freenet.edmonton.ab.ca

David Garber & E.V.M.

Since way back in 1992 David has been with the Edmonton Vocal Minority as the conductor. He remembers "back then there were only 12 of us, but just this last season there were over 100 members of the chorus. He is now the Artistic Director of EVM and feels that the chorus has hit a "stride within the community".

David turns and says;

"the Requiem last year with the Alberta Ballet and Edmonton Symphony Orchestra was a real highlight in my career".

For a man who started singing with the Pro-Choral Canada group in 1982 things have changed a lot!

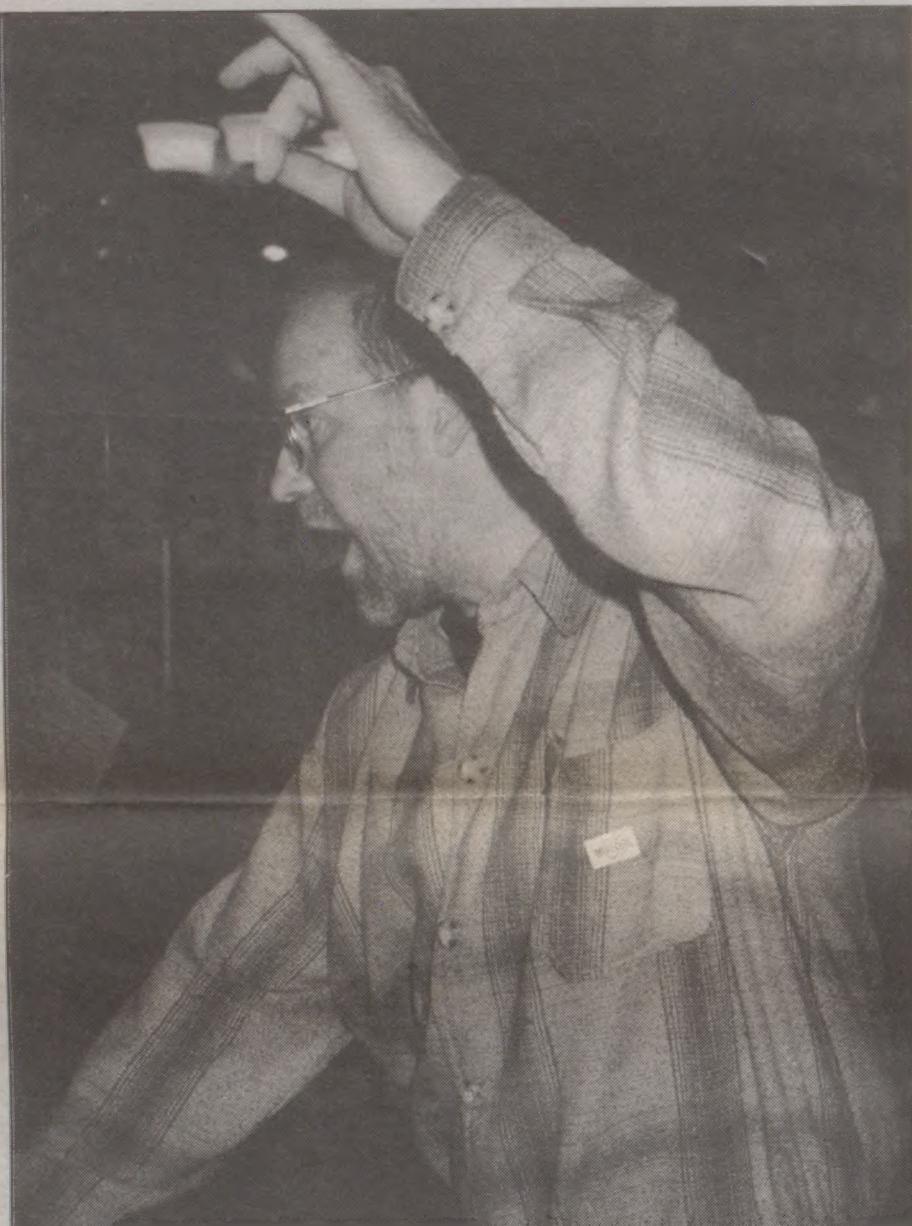
He points his direction now into this next season of special events and plans for another great year for EVM. "We have a terrific season planned and it is unbelievable how many volunteer hours go into one concert". There are lots of reasons why people join EVM and here are a few that David feels are on the top of the list:

- Provides a positive connection for everyone
- Provides supportive and safe environment to get to know one another
- For some it is a vehicle for "coming out"
- Many role models within the chorus help others deal with their own lives and their sexuality
- EVM is a way for pro-gay groups (family, brothers, sisters, and friends) to see people in a positive light.
- Develops a sense of pride within the gay/lesbian community

As to the audience reaction to the chorus, David says that the choir can feel the warmth

of the people in attendance.

"It must have something to do with the way that



music crosses all the boundaries, when we see and feel so much acceptance from so many people"

The real other pride and joy is the upcoming GALA Choruses Festival coming to Edmonton from May 15th to May 18th.

The performance will be taking place at the Winspear Centre for Music, one of Canada's finest concert halls. After attending a GALA Chorus meeting over the

Labour Day weekend David is very excited.

"We have choruses attending from all over Canada"

at this point, and now many American Choruses also want to attend". We are reminded though that this is a Canadian event. "The American choruses will be more than welcome to sing in the Festival of Choruses which will be taking place during the GALA Festival"; says Garber. Some of those attending will be coming from Waterloo, Regina, Saskatoon, Montreal, Calgary, Halifax, Toronto, Vancouver, Victoria and Ottawa.

What does all this mean to Edmonton?

It will definitely be a re-affirmation that we are not alone says David. When thousands of gays and lesbians arrive in our city we will have more contact that can help us build a bridge to acceptance. There are also plenty of planned events for the spouse as well.

"People who arrive here will be surprised by the warmth and hospitality of Edmonton"

and I really mean Edmonton!

A splendid time is guaranteed for all who wish to participate. EVM is now searching for the many volunteers to help with this event. If you would like to help in some way contact EVM at 988-4620 or e-mail to evm@freenet.edmonton.ab.ca



Dear Sassy

Sassy says thanks to Richard in Vancouver for Helot. It confirms all my suspicions of intelligent life in the universe. Now that Flabby is under sedation yet again, I'm baa-a-a-ack!!!!

Dear Sassy,

I can't seem to get over the grief I have been in since Princess Di's accident. If you can guide me out of this sea of depression I promise to never support celebrity oriented mags.

Drowning in a flood of tears

Dear cry me a river,

The Princess was an incredible lady who lived a harsh life reality while we watched it unfold before us as a fairytale. Her work for A.I.D.S. charities and in hospices no doubt brought about progress and awareness, as well as numerous other causes.

Her projects could not have succeeded without the blood, sweat and tears of the people working right here in our own backyard. She utilized her resources not unlike the rest of us. If you choose to go on a boycott that's your prerogative, to deprive yourself of very reputable mass pop culture information. Happy

Hermitting! As Isis, my Zen master would say; "A fallen leaf returning to the branch? A butterfly." As I would say; "all good things in moderation and great things in all their excesses." Whatever works.

It is unfortunate circumstances that this tragedy occurred to bring light on this whole paparazzi scandal. Was I the only one to hear the wheels of fate turning? If I carry a camera with me, can I still legally stalk my ex? Hell, do I have to draw a picture?

What's done is done. To alleviate your mourning get your depressed derrière off that sofa and be assertive and productive. Instead of sniveling at every piece of news coverage go and perform your own funeral rites, such as the requiem performed by Isis and myself. Hold your ceremony at the Eternal flame or in your own living room. Light a candle, burn some incense, read a poem, have coke and cope! You could also volunteer or financially support one of her causes. Buy the Candle in the Wind compact disc. All the money and taxes raised are going to the Princess Diana Foundation.

I've grieved and lifted the mourning veil. I continue to refer to her past tense, tell jokes, make innuendoes about Fergie and no matter what: Chuck is still butt ugly.

If you want to comment write to me at the Times 10 office. You can also go to our website on the Internet at <http://www.times10.org> and reply to me or send me questions. Just be certain that you want the answers. Oh, not to be without communication sources you can also send a fax to 488-6927.

Harold Smith

TRAVEL

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(PEDWAY TO MANULIFE)
429-2233



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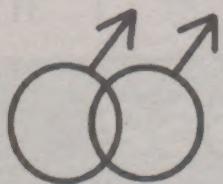
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Bev Baptiste: New Pastor at Metropolitan Community Church

I suppose some of you reading this won't go past the first paragraph. If you're like a lot of us, there's one topic that has caused you so much pain that you won't get beyond the next line, so I'll say it now: the church. Stay with me, and I'll introduce you to someone whose openness and compassion offers hope for those of us who long to be a part of a church community.

I'm talking about Bev Baptiste, new pastor of Metropolitan Community Church (MCC). She's been in her new office now for about two weeks, and "I can actually make coffee!" she laughs, as we get comfortable in her basement office of McDougall United Church. It is obvious from the books, computer, file cabinet and robes that this is a typical pastor's office, except for one thing - the church for which she provides leadership is made up mostly of gay/lesbian, bisexual and transgendered people. Hardly the norm in any other denomination!

This woman with her easy smile and welcoming handshake grew up as an army brat here in Alberta, and has been involved with MCC since 1980. After meeting the educational and experiential requirements of the denomination,

Baptiste was asked to start a church in Winnipeg in 1983, and stayed until 1990. She then became the district coordinator for the MCC congregations in western Canada until 1996, when she and her partner of eight years moved back to Edmonton. Was this all she was doing? Hardly.

Nursing has been a major source of income, says Baptiste, since most congregations are too small to support a full-time pastor. She has worked as a general duty and head nurse, nursing educator and is presently employed by the Capital Health Authority doing work with people who have hepatitis C. For Baptiste both nursing and pastoring require similar gifts.

Not surprisingly, Baptiste uses a medical image when we begin to talk about the task of the church. "MCC is the intensive care unit of the church," she says. So many of the people who come to MCC are hurting, and often because of the way they have been treated in the past by their own denomination. "I think the church should be place of support, of community," she says, "but church should also be fun. MCC can be a real presence in the community, working with the people here to reach out to others."

Some people may think that MCC is into "sheep-stealing", (that's churchy talk for taking people away from other churches). Baptiste is emphatic that that is not what MCC is about. "We are a place for people who want to be a part of a worshipping group, but can't find a place where they feel accepted."

"We have the whole spectrum from Catholic to evangelical here," says Baptiste, "so our worship tends to follow the needs of the people present." There are only two things that MCC insists on and that is that worship must be inclusive, regardless of race, gender, orientation, age, ability etc., and that weekly worship include communion. Why communion? "Because for so many of us that is what we have been denied, and it is therefore very important to us to have communion every Sunday," says Baptiste.

I ask why lesbian/gay/bi/transgendered people even need the church. Baptiste's response comes quickly and

from the heart. "Sexuality and spirituality are two of the main components of our being," she says, "and many have chosen to deny their spirituality because of the reactions of the church to homosexuality. We make a choice. But after, we discover we have not actually left our spirituality. Many of us are raised in the church; that is where we learn to be spiritual beings. We can reclaim that. The church is a place where we can examine ourselves and grow in our spirituality, and be in community with others."

Baptiste readily acknowledges that not everyone who is looking for a place to examine their spirituality will find a home in MCC. "We talk about being a church for all people, but not all people will find us to be a church for them." And that's okay with her.

How does Baptiste plan to proceed in her new job here at MCC? "I see myself as someone who can equip others to do outreach. I would like to see us create some programs and to provide some services such as a meeting place for gay youth, or lesbian/gay parenting time-out or support service for example. But if it's just my idea it won't work. It needs to be the whole congregation who set the goals and determine *their* ministries."

As our time together comes to an end, Baptiste leans forward and quotes a fellow MCCer. "One of our elders once said 'In MCC we are not the issue'. Even though we are gay or lesbian, bisexual or transgendered, we are still spiritual people. **We all need a sense of wholeness, a wholeness in all the areas of our lives.**"

Nurturing that sense of wholeness, regardless of sexual orientation, is the task Baptiste has taken on. Her congregation is fortunate to have her.

Now aren't you glad you stuck with it? You may even decide you want to talk to Baptiste yourself: she can be reached at MCC at 429-2321.

Julie C. Lloyd Barrister & Solicitor

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GAY MEN'S OUTREACH CREW

of the AIDS Network of
Edmonton

GMOC is a group of volunteers
who work together with bi and
gay men of all ages to promote
emotional and physical well
being.

GMOC is sponsoring the following free workshops.

Coming out in the 90's runs six
Wednesday's from 7 to 10 PM
beginning September 24th. The
group chooses its own topics,
which usually include issues
around coming out to family,
the workplace, homophobia,
finding self
acceptance, and of course, HIV
and AIDS and safer sex.

Being Gay in the 90's runs eight
Thursday's beginning October
30th from 7 to 10 PM exploring
issues like: risk taking,
relationships, negotiating,
coming out and safer sex.

Men Meeting Men in the 90's is
a four sessions looking at how
to meet men, be comfortable
with love, and maintaining
relationships. The workshop is
planned for early 1998.

Talking Together is an informal
discussion group, which is held
every Sunday at 7 PM at the
Gay and Lesbian Community
Centre. No registration
required. Just drop in.

GMOC can also provide one-to-
one information regarding issues
like: safer sex, sexually
transmitted diseases, and HIV
and AIDS. We are also a good
resource for finding support
groups and professionals.

End loneliness and isolation,
find new friends, fellowship and
support, or just have a whole lot
of fun by attending our
workshops. For information
or to register, call 988-3671
and leave a message, or call
GLCCE at 488-3234 or the
AIDS Network at 488-5742.

Table Music: Embracing Difference, Creating Harmony

Canmore, AB
October 3-5, 1997

For the first time ever Western Canadian Mennonites and Church of the Brethren will be holding a conference for supportive congregations and lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgendered people. The Supportive Congregations Network (SCN) of the Brethren/Mennonite Council for Lesbian and Gay Concerns (BMC) is hosting this event in **Canmore, Alberta**, on **October 3-5, 1997**. The theme, *Table Music: Embracing Difference, Creating Harmony* draws on the rich Mennonite/Brethren musical heritage, which includes singing in four part harmony. The tradition of *tafelmusik*, or table music, was a time when families gathered around the kitchen table to make music together. This will be a time when straight and gay church people can get together and not only create harmony together, but also celebrate who we are. Family, friends, pastors and lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgendered people will have an opportunity to gather together in a positive and affirming atmosphere. Non-Mennonites are also welcome to attend.

Table Music participants will be able to attend workshops, hear speakers, and enjoy a variety of recreational activities in a beautiful Rocky Mountain setting. Above all, this will be an opportunity to get to know people who are concerned about the connections between sexuality and spirituality, as well as to have a lot of fun.

If you are interested in attending *Table Music*, call Heather at 403-987-4974, or fax 403-987-4089 for more information and a registration form.

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Let's walk the Walk.

AIDS Walk Edmonton 1997
October 4, 1997
call 488-5742 to register



Edmonton 1997

Presented by
AIDS Network of Edmonton Society
Edmonton Resources Council, Alberta Council on Drugs and Alcohol
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Edmonton's Gay Community Support Groups and Services

AIDS Network of Edmonton Society

The Network retains its original operating philosophy: to provide support and education wherever it can be helpful in north-central Alberta. AIDS Network of Edmonton works cooperatively with all those organizations in Alberta and across the country who are working to help limit the spread of HIV infection. Today the network provides: Education, Info-Line, Speakers Bureau, Resource material and various Support groups. If you wish to know more about the Network call 488-5742

Alcoholics Anonymous

A A is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. Call 424-5900 for times and places of Gay and Lesbian meetings.

AXIOS - Edmonton

AXIOS is an international organization of Eastern Orthodox and Eastern-Rite Catholic Gay and Lesbian Christians. Our mandate is to promote a greater understanding of human sexuality and spirituality within the Eastern Christian tradition. The AXIOS monthly newsletter is available via the Internet. Contact Dushan at 454-8449 for more information.

Bare Naked Boys Club of Edmonton - BN BCE

A naturalist group of gay men in Edmonton interested in social nudity. This is not a sex club. Men of all ages welcome. Call Fred at 469-7231 for information.

Brethren Mennonite Council

For Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual concerns. This is a support community for gay, lesbian and bisexual Mennonites and friends. Contact Tim at 454-1479 or Garrett at 423-1725 or e-mail: garrett.epp@ualberta.ca.

Dignity Edmonton

This Edmonton chapter is a support community for gay, lesbian Catholics and friends. Contact Bernard at 451-1794 or Dennis at 482-6845

Edmonton Prime Timers

Prime Timers is a social fraternity for older gay and bisexual men and their friends. The purpose of Prime Timers is to provide an opportunity for mature gay men to fraternize and join together in a program of social activities. Meetings held 2nd Sunday each month at the Unitarian Church at 3:00 p.m. If you would like more information address correspondence to Chairman, Edmonton Prime Timers, Suite 1093, 11444 - 119

Street, Edmonton, T5G 2X6. Contact Peter at 426-7019.

Edmonton Vocal Minority

A mixed voice chorus joining together in a common love of music and a desire to build a greater spirit of unity and pride in the lesbigay community. If you are interested in singing with EVM or working in the areas of promotion, staging or front of house concerts and events, please contact us at P. O. Box 12091, Main Post Office, T5J 3L2 or telephone 988-4620.

Feather of Hope Aboriginal AIDS Prevention Society

The Feather of Hope was founded on a need to provide AIDS education and support to Native People in Alberta. Through education and the development of communities in partnership, it is hoped that the spread of AIDS will be lessened. We offer training and education programs, as well as support through traditional ways. Volunteers are very important to us, if you can help, or would simply like some more information call 488-5773

Free-To-Be Volleyball Association

We have 3 divisions: 1) Fun/Recreational - Wednesdays, 6:30-8:30 p.m.; No regular commitment needed: Now until end of June you can join anytime. Fee: \$10.00/year: Level: Beginners to Intermediate: Donnan School - 79 Ave & 87 Street. 2) Competitive Tuesdays, 7-9:30 p.m.; Fee \$35/8 week period; Coaching & Games each night. 3) Beach - Day/time/cost TBA; June to September. For more Volleyball information call Ron at 428-3375.

Gay and Lesbian Community Centre of Edmonton (G.L.C.C.E.)

The centre contributes to the well-being of Edmonton's gay, lesbian and bisexual community through informational, social support services and its social information line. The services offered by the centre include an information line, telephone referrals, library, drop-in peer support counselling and social activities arranged and sponsored by the centre. Further information is available at 488-3234

Gaylines

A special telephone service is available. The intent of this line is to aid in the forming of a central information net that will aid all walks of life. Messages are outgoing only. The line is setup in a single location that will be permanent and will also be listed in the phone directory. It is free to all Alternative Lifestyles, Support groups, Clubs. Individuals and Businesses. Call 486-9661 to request your mailbox.

Gay Men's Outreach Crew (G.M.O.C.)

G.M.O.C. is a peer education initiative for gay/bisexual men that works toward: preventing the spread of HIV amongst men who have sex with men, advocating for healthy lifestyle choices, and addressing social and health concerns by fostering self-esteem and gay positive attitudes. For information on G.M.O.C. workshops and other activities contact Kirk at 488-5742, or call our Hotline at 988-3671.

Gay and Lesbian Awareness (G.A.L.A.)

We are an organization interested in human rights issues especially related to sexual orientation and changing Federal and Provincial legislation. We are always interested in new members. If you are interested call Murray Billet at 482-7421

Illusions Social Club

A social club for Crossdressers, Transsexuals and their supporters. Our main goal is to provide a safe, discreet and friendly atmosphere where we can socialize as a group. We also provide information and peer support for members. We hold two socials each month, one on the second Thursday and one on the third Saturday. For more information write to Illusions Social Club.

Box 33002, Glenwood P.O., Edmonton, AB. T5P 4V8; or phone either 488-3234 (GLCCE) on Tuesday evenings to talk to someone person to person or 486-9661 box 1 to leave a message.

Imperial Sovereign Court of the Wild Rose

The mission of the Court is to raise funds for charities and other organizations which either provide direct services to gay and lesbian individuals. Meetings of the Society are held monthly on the last Wednesday. For meeting location and time please see the Court notice boards in Boots and Saddle or the Roost. You may also call Gaylines at 486-9661 and press box 27. <http://www.geocities.com/WestHollywood/5904>

Interfaith Association on AIDS Edmonton

The purpose of this association is to sensitize local faith communities and their leaders to the unique spiritual and emotional needs of those infected by HIV/AIDS. The following faith communities are included: Anglican, Baha'i, Baptist, Beth Shalom Synagogue, Lutheran, Metropolitan Community Church, Roman Catholic, Temple Beth Ora, Ukrainian Catholic, Unitarian and United Churches. Phone 448-1768 for more information.

Lambda Christian Community Church

We are a non-denominational evangelical Christian church. One of our primary goals is to provide a safe and affirming environment for all who desire to worship God. Lambda Community Church, 11148-84 Avenue (Garnet United Church) Edmonton, T6G 0V8. Call 474-0753. Weekly Sunday service at 7 p.m.

Liaison Committee, The

In June of 1993 Edmonton Police Service and the Gay and Lesbian community for met a liaison to promote an atmosphere of understanding and mutual respect. For more info call Edmonton Police Service at 424-7248 (pager 293) or Murray Billet at 482-7421

Lipstick Lesbian Youth Peer Support

This is an organization intended to allow all femme lesbians and bisexuals the chance to meet and realize that they are not alone. Our goal is not to segregate the lesbian community, but to acknowledge that femmes do exist. This is an opportunity to meet and socialize with other femmes. Please call 988-4836 for more information.

Living Positive

Emotional, spiritual and psychological support is available through Living Positive to all those affected by HIV infection. We offer strong, loving, confidential support. We also meet weekly and share our mutual experiences. Living Positive is entirely directed by and for people who share a common diagnosis of HIV+. Peer counselling, hospital visits and a speakers bureau are also available through our society. Phone 488-5768

Lutherans Concerned: Edmonton

We are a spiritual community for lesbian, gay, bisexual and straight people. Lutherans Concerned gathers monthly for worship, sharing, and friendship. We offer individual support and a safe space for our own spiritual questions. Call Tim at 482-2294, or write P.O. Box 11095, Edmonton, AB, T5J 3K4 e-mail: luthcon@freenet.edmonton.ab.ca

Metropolitan Community Church of Edmonton (M.C.C.)

We are a local church within the denomination of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches. Our major focus is to the defranchised of society. The UFMCC allows anyone to feel a part of the Christian Community and to claim our place in God's Universe. Services are open to all. We worship on Sunday evenings at 7:15 at McDougall United Church - South entrance. Please feel free to join us! Call 429-2321 for more information.

Northern Chaps

Edmonton's Leather - Fetish club for Gay, Lesbian, and straight men and womyn was established six years ago. We strive to educate

the rest of the community through workshops, staged demonstrations and events in order to heighten awareness. Northern Chaps meets at Boots & Saddle on the first and third Friday of each month at 9 PM.

Northern Titans

Northern Titans International Bowling League meets every Saturday, at 5:00pm September to April, at Pins & Cues Bowling & Billiards Centre, Southeast corner of Westmount Shopping Centre, 111 Ave. & 135 St. For more information please call Paul Guerette at (403) 456-0851 or Karen Kurylo at (403) 432-7759.

Out and Out (O²)

An Outdoor and Recreation Group for Edmonton's Lesbogay Community and their friends. Membership is \$5.00 per calendar year. Free newsletter published bimonthly and available at local gay hangouts. O² Hotline is 988-3132 for activity info., who to contact, how to join etc. Get Involved - Have Fun - Meet New People..

OUTreach

OUTreach is a university based organization for gays, lesbians and bisexuals interested in an academic atmosphere. Meetings are held every Tuesday at 5:00 p.m. on campus; main floor of the Athabasca hall. Topics vary from week to week. Additional information is available by calling 988-4166.

PFLAG

Parents, Families, & Friends of Lesbians & Gays. PFLAG promotes the health and well-being of Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual persons, their families and friends through support, education and advocacy. Meetings are held the 3rd Tuesday of the month. Newsletter editor Ellen at 465-3057. Outreach to speak confidentially to a PFLAG volunteer 944-1394. Voice Box 3524 (PFLAG) Mon-Thurs, 7-9:30 p.m. (Recording 24 hrs a day).

Pink Triangle Youth of Edmonton (P.T.Y.E.)

The Pink Triangle Youth Group is a program offered by the Community Centre. The youth group exists so that young people age 16 to 21 - lesbians, gays, bisexuals and those wondering about their sexuality can explore their feelings, meet other young people like themselves. Information is available to all along with fun in a safe, supportive environment. Phone 906-6221 for more information about the Youth Group.

S.O.L.O.

Social Organization for Lesbians Only is a group that gets together for fun and recreation. Lesbians over 18 are welcome to join in for weekend functions and entertainment. We combine friendship, companionship and support with singles and couples welcome. Call Linda at 447-4776 for more information

Team Edmonton

Team Edmonton - Gay Games Association is set up to provide an opportunity for person interested in participating in the Gay Games through fund raising. If you would like to be involved with Team Edmonton call 482-2789

Visions - Unitarian Church of Edmonton
Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender discussion group. We meet the 4th Wednesday of the month. Call UCE at 454-8073 or Anita at 454-1992. Not necessarily Christian.

Wominspace

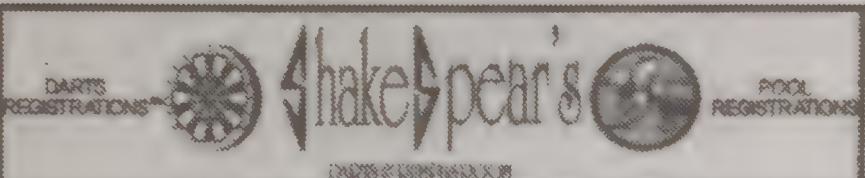
The purpose of Wominspace is to foster a positive Lesbian identity among ourselves and the larger community. We hold dances, produce a newsletter and hold other activities. For information call the Lesbian Life at 425-0511.

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Supreme Court Interventions in the Delwin Vriend Case

Each intervenor is expected to file a factum not to exceed 20 pages in length and to present oral argument limited to 10 minutes.

FOR DELWIN VRIEND

- 1- Alberta Civil Liberties Association
- 2- Canadian Bar Association Alberta branch
- 3- Canadian Jewish Congress
- 4- Canadian Human Rights Commission
- 5- CASHRA - Canadian Association of Human Rights Agencies
- 6- Canadian Labour Congress
- 7- EGALE - Equality for Gays and Lesbians Everywhere.
- 8 - LEAF - Women's Legal Education and Action Fund
- 9 - Conference of the United Church of Canada
- 10- Canadian AIDS Society (just applied for status a couple of weeks ago)
- 11- Attorney General of Canada
- 12 - Foundation for Equal Families
- 13- Attorney General of Newfoundland

FOR THE GOVERNMENT

- 1 - Focus on the Family Canada Association
- 2 - Evangelical Fellowship of Canada
- 3 - AFWUF Alberta Federation of Women United for Families
- 4 - Christian Legal Fellowship
- 5- Attorney General of Ontario

What the Vriend Case is about:

Review Human Rights legislation according to the equality requirements in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Find that exclusion of sexual orientation from the protections of the province's Human Rights legislation is not justified. Read sexual orientation into those sections of the legislation that expresses the commitment to equality and dignity, prohibit discrimination and provide for education. The Vriend case is about Alberta's legislation and whether it complies with the equality guarantees contained in s 15 of the charter. It is about whether gays and lesbians who have been subjected to discrimination will have the right to seek a resolution through the Alberta Human Rights and Citizenship Commission.

The Vriend Case is NOT about:

Kings College itself or if they in fact discriminated against Delwin Vriend. The court is not being asked to rule on a particular complaint of discrimination. It is not a case about religious rights or freedoms. Delwin getting his job back.

Status of Sexual Orientation issues across Canada

Alberta

Alberta has not yet amended its human rights legislation to prohibit discrimination against lesbians, gays and bisexuals.

In 1991, Kings College dismissed gay employee Delwin Vriend, claiming that his continued employment violated their religious policy against homosexuality. Vriend launched a legal challenge to have "sexual orientation" read into the Alberta Individual Rights Protection Act. He was successful before the Alberta Court of Queen's Bench, but this decision was overturned by the Alberta Court of Appeal in 1996, which ruled that the Alberta government was entitled to exclude gays and lesbians from the scope of human rights protection. The Vriend v Alberta case has now been appealed to the Supreme Court of Canada. More recently, the Alberta government has announced that lesbians, gays and bisexuals will no longer be eligible to foster children. This decision is being challenged by lesbian foster mother Ms. T.

British Columbia

In 1992, British Columbia amended its human rights legislation to include sexual orientation as a prohibited ground of discrimination. The British Columbia government has also extended same-sex benefits to provincial employees. The Health Care (Consent) and Care Facility (Admission) Act now enables lesbians, gays and bisexuals to make medical decisions on behalf of a same-sex partner who is incapacitated.

B.C. adoption legislation was amended in November of 1996 to permit same-sex couples to adopt. The B.C. government has now amended the definition of "spouse" in the Family Relations Act and the Family Maintenance Enforcement Act to accord to same-sex couples the same custody, maintenance and support rights and responsibilities as those accorded to heterosexual couples, and to allow same-sex couples to register agreements relating to cohabitation and property division. The B.C. government has recently announced that it may be reviewing all provincial legislation with a view to eliminating discrimination against same-sex couples.

Manitoba

Manitoba included "sexual orientation" in its human rights legislation as a prohibited ground of discrimination in 1987. To date, the government has taken no steps to recognize same-sex couples equally under provincial law, although in 1995 the Manitoba Court of Appeal ruled in Vogel v Manitoba that it is discriminatory for the government to deny equal workplace benefits to its lesbian and gay employees.

New Brunswick

New Brunswick amended its human rights legislation to prohibit sexual orientation discrimination 1992. The New Brunswick government has extended workplace benefits to lesbian and gay provincial employees. Provincial legislation does not yet accord equal family law rights and responsibilities to lesbians and gays.

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Newfoundland

The Human Rights Act of Newfoundland does not yet prohibit discrimination against lesbians, gays and bisexuals. The Government of Newfoundland has publicly committed itself to amending the legislation to prohibit sexual orientation discrimination. A Newfoundland Court has ruled that "sexual orientation" must be read into the Newfoundland Human Rights Act, but this decision has been appealed by the government. The appeal is on hold pending resolution by the Supreme Court of Canada of a similar case involving the Alberta human rights legislation.

Nova Scotia

Nova Scotia amended its human rights legislation to prohibit sexual orientation discrimination in 1991. The Nova Scotia government has extended workplace benefits to lesbian and gay provincial employees. Provincial legislation does not yet accord equal family law rights and responsibilities to lesbians and gays.

Northwest Territories

The human rights legislation of the Northwest Territories does not yet prohibit sexual orientation discrimination, although lesbians, gays and bisexuals working in areas of federal jurisdiction are protected by the recent amendment to the Canadian Human Rights Act. The government of the Northwest Territories has extended equal workplace benefits

to lesbian and gay government employees. The government of the Northwest Territories is conducting a review of its family law legislation. The recently-formed lesbian, gay and bisexual rights organization Out North testified in support of changes to the definition of "spouse" to include same-sex couples.

Ontario

"Sexual orientation" was added to the Ontario Human Rights Code in 1986. The Code still contains an "opposite sex" definition of "marital status", although this definition was ruled unconstitutional by a human rights tribunal in 1992. The Ontario Government introduced Bill 167 in 1994; this Bill would have amended the definition of "spouse" in 79 provincial statutes to include those in same-sex relationships, but the legislation was defeated on June

9, 1994. The Ontario government has extended equal workplace benefits to gays and lesbians. The Substitute Decisions and Consent to Treatment Act has been amended to permit lesbians, gays and bisexuals to make medical decisions on behalf of a same-sex partner who is incapacitated. Ontario Courts have ruled that the definition of "spouse" in provincial adoption legislation must be extended to permit lesbians and gays to adopt their partner's children. The Ontario Court of Appeal has also ruled that spousal support provisions must be extended to include gays and lesbians. This decision is currently under appeal to the Supreme Court of Canada.

Prince Edward Island

Prince Edward Island human rights legislation does not yet prohibit sexual orientation discrimination. The PEI government has recently announced its intention to review its Human Rights Act to address issues relating to patronage; community initiatives are planned to lobby for amendments to prohibit discrimination against lesbians, gays and bisexuals during the review process. A letter from the Premier of PEI indicates an intention to include "sexual orientation" in the legislation.

Quebec

Quebec amended its human rights legislation to prohibit sexual orientation discrimination in 1977. Until 1996, article 137 of the Quebec Charte des droits permitted discrimination on the ground of sexual orientation in certain areas such as insurance and pension plans. Bill 133 repealed this provision in June of 1996. No steps have yet been taken, however, to require the equal recognition of same-sex relationships.

Saskatchewan

Saskatchewan included "sexual orientation" in its human rights legislation as prohibited ground discrimination in

1993. To date, the government has taken no steps to recognize same-sex couples equally under provincial law.

Yukon Territory

The Yukon Territory amended its human rights legislation to prohibit sexual orientation discrimination in 1987. The government of the Yukon Territory has extended equal workplace benefits to lesbian and gay government employees.

Other territorial legislation does not yet accord equal family law rights and responsibilities to lesbians and gays.



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Same Sex Couples and wills

By Julie C. Lloyd

Death is a subject that few of us care to contemplate. It is for this reason that just as few of us consider drafting wills. Dying intestate (that is, without a will) can be inconvenient and time consuming in the heterosexual world but can be devastating in same sex couples.

The legislation that governs the division of a person's estate if that person dies without a will is called the Intestate Succession Act. This act was enacted to put in place a kind of "default will". That is, for people who failed to draft a will, the Intestate Succession Act is to step in and determine who gets what from the deceased person's estate. In creating this legislation, the drafters tried to stand in the shoes of the "average person" and determine whom they would most likely give their estate to if they had gotten around to drafting a will. Not surprisingly perhaps, the drafters stepped into the loafers of an "average heterosexual" and not those of the gay and lesbian community.

According to Alberta legislation, If you die without a will your estate will be given to your spouse (read heterosexually married spouse) and your children (read biological or adoptive children) if you have any. If you have no heterosexual married spouse or biological or adopted children, your estate goes to your parents if they survive you or to your brothers and sisters if your parents don't survive you or to your

nieces and nephews if your brothers and sisters don't survive you. You will notice that nowhere in this list of beneficiaries does friend, same sex partners, or children of same sex partners appear.

The long and short of this is that if you die without a will but with a same sex partner. Your partner will not receive any assets in your estate. This may make for much distress after you have departed.

Even if the Intestate Succession Act does reflect the wishes you might have in terms of disposing of your estate when you die, without a will there is the requirement that a personal representative must be appointed by the courts, which requirement will cost time and money. In addition friends and charities will not receive anything of your estate and you personal representative would not be allowed to distribute any of your personal and sentimental belongings to the people you may want to have such things.

It is possible to draft your own will. It is also possible for a lawyer draft one for you. If you decide to draft your own I would recommend a book called *Wills for Alberta* written by Cheryl C. Gottselig and published by Self Counsel Press. This book is available at many stationary stores and bookstores. (I last saw it at Audrey's).

Whether you draft your own will or hire a lawyer to do it for you, it is important to give the matter careful thought. I will highlight a few things you might want to keep in mind.

It is important to think out all the "worst case scenarios" when you draft a will. That is, your will should address the possibility that different beneficiaries may die before you do and to consider alternate beneficiaries when drafting a will. For example, your will may provide that all of your estate goes to your partner. You may want to continue that, "if my partner predeceases me then I direct that my estate be paid or transferred to...."

Another thing to keep in mind is that if you want to leave the whole of your estate to your partner, but to no other person if your partner dies before you, you create a kind of "death lottery". That is, the partner to die last will have received his or her partner's estate some time prior and so the lucky beneficiaries of the last partner to die will get the combined estate of both partners.

One way to deal with this is for both partners to have identical "if my partner dies before me, then..." provisions in their wills which includes the combined beneficiaries of both partners. Keep in mind, however, that the surviving partner can change his or her will at any time before his or her own death.

An other thing to keep in mind is that if cohabiting partners have wills that give a portion of their estate to beneficiaries to other than their partner, it will be important to know who owns what in a relationship. Otherwise an executor will be left to try and figure out which of the combined assets were owned by the deceased. This will not be a very easy task. One way to deal with this problem of commingled assets is to draft an agreement that identifies who owns what. This can be accomplished with a cohabitation agreement.

Finally, the Domestic Relations Act provides that one can name a guardian for a child in a will. It is always possible for someone to challenge the guardianship of children so such appointment does not guarantee status, but it will help.

Although we continue to lobby for changes to the legislation, the only way presently for members of our community to protect our non-biological loved ones after we die is to carefully draft and execute a will.

In the coming months I will be addressing several legal issues of interest to members of the gay and lesbian community. If any of you have a topic that you would like to have addressed please give me a call.

It's your duty to Vote

By Fred Dicker

Are you feeling frustrated? Most of us are familiar with the Delwin Vriend case and with the foster parenting issues with Miss T and now we have the Red Deer Museum case. Stockwell Day's behaviour has made it very clear to me that his motivation in politics in general is to promote his own personal religious right agenda on the public at large whether it is on abortion or income tax or gay bashing.

We are accused of having a "gay agenda". Our agenda is equal rights and opportunity for everyone to enjoy living in a democratic society. Everyone including members of the religious right should have equal opportunity to live their personal choice of life style restricted only by the rules and regulations of our democratic society which should not be discriminatory in any way. Day's agenda is to shove his personal values on to everyone and you only have equal rights or opportunity if you agree with him because he is correct.

Elected representatives in our society do have an opportunity to push their own agenda onto everyone. They also have opportunity to do right thing. Every citizen has a right to vote. Many representatives get elected because they get their supporters out to vote for them. Many representative get elected because too many eligible voters that might not have voted for them feel powerless and that their vote would not make any difference and they just stay HOME.

In the last provincial election, a slim margin elected Victor Doerksen of Red Deer with less than 47% of the votes cast. Considerable effort is made to have equal numbers of voters in each riding. Stockwell Day of the other Red Deer riding easily got elected with 4688 votes out of 8450 cast. But there was 12254 votes cast in the other riding. This difference of 3800 votes suggests to me that Day got his supporters out and at least 3800 voters who maybe would not have voted for him just stayed home. Overall in the last provincial election the voter turnout was only around 56% of which the Conservatives got 51.2% of the votes cast. If there was a 100% voter turnout then the overall result could be very different. Until this happens, getting yourself and all your friends in the GLBT community out to vote could easily win or lose any election.

We often cannot write letters to politicians or newspapers because it could easily cost us our job or apartment. The next election coming up in one year is at the municipal level. Do you want Bill Smith in for another three years? Do you want Michael Phair in for another term if he chooses to run? You can make a difference! Do exercise your most basic right, that of a secret ballot.

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CALLING ALL LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDER, and TRANSEXUAL YOUTH: TELL ME YOUR STORIES

By Gloria Filax

Thirty years almost to the day I recall my first public encounter with homophobia with some of the same pain scored on me that day. I was attending Queen Elizabeth High School for my grade 11 year. As I was walking down one of the halls with a new friend, I heard people laughing and pointing saying "Thursday is fruits' day, only fruits wear green." I was wearing a green dress (in those days, females were not

allowed to wear pants to school!). Ten or so years later I remember watching a Monty Python's Flying Circus show on late night television. The skit was called something like "some dangerous fruits" and sported various actors wielding bananas or perhaps oranges. My submerged self had a wary eye on the subtext knowing that within a heteronormative society, 'fruits' are dangerous people from whom one required protection. And that was exactly what I was engaged in protecting myself from my self.

Thirty years ago it was not safe for me to be the out person I am today. Twenty years ago I was in hiding from myself. However, I am who I am today, in part, because of these experiences and the particular ways in which I handled things within my own context. While I don't believe that it was possible to be out and this is still the case for the vast majority of youth because of financial dependence and many other reasons, I may not have remained hidden as long as I did if I had places and spaces within which to tell my stories and come to know my self.

A year ago I decided that I wanted to change my dissertation topic because I was bored with what I was doing and because over the last seven years I have been actively engaged in a coming out process including a recovery of my young queer self. Thus, I am doing my Ph.D. dissertation working with gay, lesbian, transgender, transsexual, and

bisexual youth. I am asking them to tell me their life histories with a particular focus on school experiences. I want to know how each make sense of her/his/her-his identity, experience and consciousness. In particular I want to understand how they do this within the province of Alberta.

Alberta holds the distinction in Canada of being the province of state-sanctioned homophobia, which is taken up by elected and un-elected government workers. Former cabinet minister Ken Kowalski's bitter remarks on the performance art of the Kiss 'n Tell Collective at the Banff School of Arts was an early example. The firing of Delwin Vriend and subsequent refusal of a hearing at the Alberta Human Rights Commission is another instance. The refusal to honour the outstanding career of singer k.d. Lang in the Alberta legislature, because she is lesbian and anti-beef activist is still another. The denial of foster children to Ms.T., a foster mother with a longstanding and exemplary record, has been unfolding over the past months and most recently the Red Deer Museum was the target of a threat to recall a grant they were using toward a lesbian and gay history in the Red Deer area. Each of these homophobic acts by the Alberta government is aided and abetted by the *Alberta Report*, a hydra-headed excuse for journalism which finds its way onto the coffee tables and into the receptions areas of Everywhere, Alberta.

Even if one is not aware of all or any of these events, it is my contention that the effects of this homophobia pulses throughout Alberta and has an impact on individual gay,

lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and transsexual lives. The effects are not all negative. For example, how many of us would know about the Red Deer Museum project if Stockwell Day had not told us about it? Even more important, each of these homophobic events fuels our resistance. Queer communities become increasingly vocal and visible. Breaking the silence, being here and queer, can break through the alienation and isolation that so many feel as youth.

Queer lives exceed the dreariness implied by state-sanctioned homophobia. It is the interplay of Alberta's unique political context with individual lives of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered, and transsexual youth that I am presently researching. If you are interested in telling me your story, I would like to hear from you. I promise anonymity and confidentiality. I offer a safe space for us to engage in this dialogue or a space of your choosing. For those of you who have any interest (no homophobes need reply!), suggestions or comments please contact me as well. I am on email at: gfilax@gpu.srv.ualberta.ca or you may write to me care of Times 10, At 10121-124 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T5K 2L4

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A Voice From GLCCE



Fall update from GLCCE

Everyone at the Gay and Lesbian Community Centre of Edmonton is settling in for a busy season that will end with Pride '98 in late June. Do plan to get involved with Pride '98 by attending the first organizational meeting October 5 at 11 AM at the Centre. Then everyone can relax again and maybe let things slide a bit while we all concentrate on enjoying our all too short Edmonton summer.

Some are finding that the busyness in their lives means they cannot continue to volunteer at the Centre and others find that now they can volunteer. Many hands make for easy work and the more volunteers we have the better it is for everyone. Do call for details. Our peer-counselling course at no cost will be run again starting the first week of October. Peer counselling is a great way for you to give back to your community and feel good

about yourself. Do call or drop in for details.

Our Wednesday night movies will resume in October. Lyons Empire donates the movies and all have subject content relevant to our community. This is a great no cost way to see a movie and discuss it with some new and interesting friends that you have just met.

Movies Scheduled for October are:

October 1 - Steppin' Out - Liza Minnelli makes magic as a down but determined teacher, set on turning her class of square pegs into shining stars.
October 8 - Last Exit to Brooklyn - Jennifer Jason Leigh, Burt Young and Ricki Lake star in this brilliant adaptation of the controversial book that shocked the world. High drama.
October 15 - Breaking the Code - This is the story of the mathematical genius Alex Turing (Derek Jacobi) who designed the computer that cracked the German Enigma Code. It is argued that his efforts enabled the allies to win World War II. His treatment by the military once the war is over is a modern day witch hunt.
October 22 - Claire of the Moon - Sensual, provocative and deeply intimate, Claire of the Moon is a movie where women find each other and in the process, discover a new path to themselves.
October 29 - And the Band Played On -

Mathew Modine stars as Dr. Francis, researcher at CDC who seeks to uncover the causes of a number of unknown deaths. This movie is powerful and moving with an all star cast of characters including Lilly Tomlin and Alan Alda. We will also occasionally show documentary films or hold other informational nights on Thursdays. Do call or drop in for details or with ideas. On October 9 come see films about our history from San Francisco.

Our library continues to grow with new donations and the cataloging and labelling process is ongoing. Drop in to the Centre and have a look.

Gay Mens Outreach Crew is holding their 6 to 8 weeklong workshops starting this fall with the first one starting September 24. These workshops are designed to reduce loneliness and isolation, find new friends, fellowship and

support, provide information about our community and be lots of fun too. Also every Sunday night at 7 PM you can drop into the Centre for informal discussions about anything that may effect our lives as gay men. Do call or drop in for details.

Starting in early October there will be a similar workshop run by the Centre but

with a difference. GMOC is for men only and this workshop is for women only. There may be a weekly drop in started up for women as well. Do call or drop in for details.

Something that did slip a little during the summer was our web page found at <http://freenet.edmonton.ab.ca/glcce/>. It is up to date now and will be updated weekly. We strongly encourage everyone to make sure the Centre knows about anything that is happening in our community so we can tell anyone who calls or drops in about it and put it on the web page. Magazines and newspapers know about it then and more advertising means more success for everyone. Do drop in or call us at 488-3234 or email to glcce@freenet.edmonton.ab.ca

Something else that has slipped over the summer is many memberships have expired and have not been renewed. I feel and many agree with me that our Community Centre is very important in our community so do support it by being a member or volunteering or donating money or whatever to help make it all happen.

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Gay Marriage: The Arguments and the Motives

A personal essay by Scott Bidstrup

Ask just about anyone. They'll all tell you they're in favor of equal rights for homosexuals. Just same the situation, and ask. They'll all say, yes, gays should have the same rights in housing, jobs, public accommodations, and should have equal access to government benefits, equal protection of the law, etceteras.

Then you get to gay marriage.

And that's when all this talk of equality stops dead cold.

Nearly three people in four in the U.S. oppose gay marriage, almost the same proportion as are otherwise supportive of gay rights. This means that many of the same people who are even passionately in favor of gay rights oppose gays on this one issue.

Why all the passion?

It's because there is a lot of misunderstanding about what homosexuality really is, a lot of stereotypes about gay relationships, and even a great deal of misunderstanding of what marriage itself is all about. The purpose of this essay is to clear up a few of these misunderstandings and

discuss some of facts surrounding gay



relationships and marriage, gay and straight. First, let's discuss what gay relationships are really all about. The stereotype has it that gays are promiscuous, unable to form lasting relationships, and the relationships that do form are shallow and uncommitted. And gays do have such relationships!

But the important fact to note is that just like in straight society, where such relationships also exist, they are a small minority, and exist primarily among the very young. Indeed, one of the most frequent complaints of older gay men is that it is almost impossible to find quality single men to get into a relationship with, because they're already all 'taken'! If you attend any gay event, such as a Pride festival or a PFLAG convention, you'll find this to be true. As gays age and mature, just like their straight cohorts, they begin to appreciate and find their way into long-term committed relationships.

The values that such gay couples exhibit in their daily lives are often indistinguishable from those of their straight neighbors. They're loyal to their mates, are monogamous, devoted partners. They value and participate in family life, are committed to making their neighborhoods and communities safer and better places to live, and honor and abide by the law. Many make valuable contributions to

their communities, serving on school boards, volunteering in community charities, and trying to be good citizens. In doing so, they take full advantage of their relationship to make not only their own lives better, but those of their neighbors as well.

A benefit to heterosexual society of gay marriage is the fact that the commitment of a marriage means the participants are discouraged from promiscuous sex. This has the advantage of slowing the spread of sexually transmitted diseases, which know no sexual orientation and are equal opportunity destroyers.

So, having established the value of gay marriage, why are people so opposed to it?

Many of the reasons offered for opposing gay marriage are based on the assumption that gays have a choice in who they can feel attracted to, and the reality is quite different. Many people actually believe that gays could simply choose to be heterosexual if they wished. But the reality is that very few do have a choice — any more than very few heterosexuals could choose which sex to find themselves attracted to.

Well, of course there are a lot of reasons being offered these days for opposing gay marriage, and they are usually variations on a few well-established themes. Interestingly, a court in Hawaii has recently heard them all. And it found, after due deliberation, that they didn't hold water.

Here's a summary:

Same-sex couples aren't the optimum environments in which to raise children. That's an interesting one, in light of who society *does* allow to get married and bring children into their marriage. Check it out: murderers, convicted felons of all sorts, *even known child molesters* are all allowed to freely marry and procreate, and do so every day, with hardly a second thought by these same critics. So if children are truly the priority here, why is this allowed? The fact is that many gay couples raise children, adopted and occasionally their own from failed attempts at heterosexual marriages. Lots and lots of scientific studies have shown that the outcomes of the children raised in the homes of gay and lesbian couples are just as good as those of straight couples. The differences have been shown again and again to be insignificant. Psychologists tell us that what makes the difference is the *love* of the parents, not their gender. The studies are very clear about that. And gay people are as capable of loving children as fully as anyone else.

Same-sex marriage would threaten the institution of marriage. That one's contradictory right on the face of it. Threaten marriage? By allowing people to marry? That doesn't sound very logical to me. If you allow gay people to marry each other, you no longer encourage them to marry people to whom they feel little attraction, with whom they most often cannot relate sexually, and thereby reduce the number of supposed heterosexual marriages that end up in the divorce courts. If it is the institution of heterosexual marriage that worries you, then consider that no one would require you or anyone else to participate in a gay marriage. So you would have freedom of choice, of choosing what kind of marriage to participate in — something more than what you have now. And speaking of divorce — to argue that the institution of marriage is worth preserving at the cost of requiring involuntary participants to remain in it is a better argument for tightening divorce laws than proscribing gay marriage.

Marriage is traditionally a heterosexual institution. This is morally the weakest argument. Slavery was also a traditional institution, based on traditions that went back to the very beginnings of human history. But by the 19th century, humankind had realized the evils of that institution, and has since largely abolished it. Why not recognize the truth — that there is no moral ground on which to support the tradition of marriage as a strictly heterosexual institution, and remove the restriction?

The real reasons people oppose gay

marriage

So far, we've examined the reasons everyone give for opposing gay marriage. Let's examine now the *real* reasons people oppose it, even fear it: **Making love to another man betrays everything that is macho.** Well, I've known (and dated) plenty of very masculine gay men in my day, including a Hell's Angel biker type, who, if you suggested he is a limp-wristed fairy, would likely rip your head off and hand it to you. There was a long-honored tradition of gay relationships among the tough and macho cowboys of the Old West. Plenty of masculine, respected movie stars are gay. Indeed, Rock Hudson was considered the very *archetype* of a masculine man. Came, as quite a shock to a lot of macho-men to find out he was gay! So what's wrong with all these kinds of men expressing love for each other? Is that so wrong? A society that devalues love devalues that upon which civilized society is based. Should *any* form of that love be discouraged?

Of course, the real *root* of that fear is the fear of being the object of an attempted seduction. Well, all you fearful heterosexual men out there can relax. There are enough willing gay men around that we don't need you. Besides, the vast majority of gay men have better taste than to try to seduce the unwilling anyway. You may fear us, but most of us are *disgusted* by you! In fact, most of us wouldn't take a "het" home if he was the last guy in the bar, and he *did* say yes!

The thought of gay sex is repulsive. Well, it will come as some surprise to a lot of heterosexuals to find out that, to a lot of gays, *the thought of heterosexual sex is repulsive!* But does that mean the discomfort of some gays to heterosexual couples should be a reason to deny heterosexuals the right to marry? I don't think so, even though the thought of a man kissing a woman is rather repulsive to many homosexuals! Well then, why should it work the other way? Besides, the same sexual practices that gays engage in are often engaged in by heterosexual couples anyway. Prompting the ever-popular gay T-shirt: "SO-DO-MY — SO DO MY neighbors, SO DO MY friends."

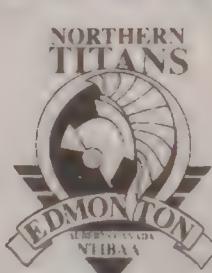
Why This Is A Civil Rights Issue
When gay people say that this is a civil rights issue, we are referring to matters like the fact that we cannot make medical decisions for our partners in an emergency. Instead, the hospitals are usually forced by state laws to go to the families who may be estranged from us for decades, who are often hostile to us, and totally ignore our wishes for the treatment of our partners. If that hostile family wishes to exclude us from the hospital room, they may legally do so in nearly all cases. It is even not uncommon for hostile families to make decisions based on their hostility — with results actually intended to be inimical to the interests of the patient! One couple I know uses the following line in the "sig" lines on their email: "...partners and lovers for 40 years, yet still strangers before the law." Is this fair?

If our partners are arrested, we can be compelled to testify against them or provide evidence against them, which legally married couples are not forced to do.

In many cases, even carefully drawn wills and durable powers of attorney

Continued on page 22

NORTHERN TITANS



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Gay Marriage

Continued from page 20

have frequently proven to not be enough if a family wishes to challenge a will, overturn a custody decision, or exclude us from a funeral or deny us the right to visit a partner's grave. As survivors, they can even seize a real estate property that we may have been buying together for years, quickly sell it at a huge loss and stick us with the remaining debt on a property we no longer own.

These aren't just theoretical issues, either; they happen with surprising frequency. Almost any older gay couple can tell you stories of friends who have been victimized in such ways. These are all civil rights issues that have nothing whatever to do with the ecclesiastical origins of marriage; they are matters that have become enshrined in state laws over the years in many ways that exclude us from the rights that legally married couples enjoy and consider their right. This is why we say it is very much a civil rights issue; it has nothing to do with who performs the ceremony or whether an announcement is accepted for publication in the local paper. It is not a matter of "special rights" to ask for the *same* rights that other couples enjoy by law, even by constitutional mandate.

Conclusion

As we have seen, the arguments against gay marriage don't hold up to close scrutiny. Neither the arguments traditionally raised nor the real feelings of the opponents make much sense when held up to the light of reason.

So let's get on with it. Let's get over our aversion to what we oppose for silly, irrational reasons, based on ignorance and faulty assumptions, and make ours a more just and honorable society, finally honoring that last phrase from the Pledge of Allegiance; "With liberty and justice for all."

Source URL: <http://www.pe.net/~bidstrup/marriage.htm>

An Opinion

Response to Haskins col. "Phair should stay in clothes closet"

Note: On May 24th Councillor Michael Phair was one of four panelists at the Canadian Association of Journalists National Convention in Edmonton. He had been invited to be part of a session entitled "Queer Reporting 101" and to describe his experiences as a Gay man in public life. Subsequently the Edmonton Sun carried three articles attacking Phair. The following was written to The Sun in reply to the homophobic column written May 28 by Scott Haskins. The Sun did not publish it. By Jim W. Martyn

The weird thoughts offered up in Haskins' column attacking Councilor Michael Phair raise a couple of disturbing questions. Is this writer simply ignorant? Or is he malicious and bigoted? Or is he driven by a weird fantasy that somehow in his journalist scribbling he humorously portrays life, regardless of the consequences it might heap on his victims? The answers must concern anyone holding beliefs in equality of individuals in a diverse society.

Haskins claims that he has no problem with homosexuality. He says he accepts Phair as a Gay man. But he expresses a wish that Phair keeps all of this quiet. "It's okay that you're Gay but, hey man, don't tell me about it. And, for heaven's sake, don't tell me about Gay culture or Gay tradition".

Haskins, who contends he writes about "real life". He expresses the hypocrisy of those comfortably eschewed in a dominant group offering tokens of freedom to those they oppress by maliciously or ignorantly attempting to shift the blame for lack of human rights to those demanding them. He does this by writing: "If a gay person wants to be treated the same as the rest of us, why act differently?"

Undoubtedly this white, middle class, heterosexual male, would demand also that Aboriginals act like he does; all Asian Canadians must act like he does; all Canadians of colour must act like he does. To "be treated the same as the rest of us" all cultural and traditional diversity that enriches minority communities must be cast aside. Such a view is a shocking revelation of the lack of insight into real life.

Gays and Lesbians no more want to be treated the same as "the rest of us" than do any other cultural, ethnic, or racial minority. They want, and have the right, to be treated equally. There is a distinct difference, one that Haskins is certainly not alone in being incapable of grasping. This was an element of the panel discussion Haskins briefly mentions Phair participating in from which he extracted the distorted views of his column.

Some might suggest that Haskins is offering up discriminatory prose, albeit not good, attacking Phair on the basis of his sexual orientation. He is, but maybe not intentionally. It's maybe due to his incapacity to see richness in human diversity. Instead, like so many that cling to a narrow worldview, he attempts to ridicule those who live and behave "differently". Haskins is clear that he finds human diversity disturbing.

It is indeed odd that a journalist would suggest that a politician hide who and what he is all about. That's what he demands. Yet so many of his colleagues bewail the apparent lack of honesty amidst politicians.

It is not simply a question of Michael Phair being honest with whom he is. It is about a politician coming from a minority background who is attempting to build bridges of understanding to the larger community. That's strengthening social cohesion, which real life is about. Members of society's dominant groups, like Haskins, feel threatened by such initiatives. They will be forced to change their worldview, or become uncomfortable and even frustrated. They resort to popular rhetoric to disguise their argument that emancipation of the individual - if he belongs to a minority - be watered down so that the majority does not have its comfortable position ruffled. We saw much of this in the recent federal campaign.

The media obsesses with categorizing politicians. Phair does not fit into Haskins' mental pigeonholes. So he demands that the Councillor change his act so that he does fit, even if it means denying publicly who he is. With his sad attempt at humorous ridicule Haskins wants Phair to forget the quality of the individual which makes each of us different. He demands that Michael Phair hide the very essence of his difference, which God has instilled in him. He asks that this Councillor, who even Haskins admits is one of Edmonton's best, deny who he is and who God calls him to be, at least publicly.

Haskins might look in himself for a moment and attempt to glimpse the type of society he is advocating. It's not real. But then his attack on Phair and the Gay community reveals a narrow view of real life. What ever his critics might say, they cannot claim that Michael Phair denies real life. Jim Martyn is a Saskatchewan-based Commentator and public affairs counsellor. E-mail: jmartyn@sk.sympatico.ca

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New Book Chapter in Edmonton?

As I write, I've just received an invitation to attend the opening of the new Chapters Bookstore - business attire (do I wear an Orlando Books -T shirt??) and an RSVP to a Toronto phone number. Although curious to see what all the fuss is about, and tempted to further embellish my T-shirt with an I AM NOT AFRAID message, I've decided to finish the newsletter, and to think again about the whole issue of large corporations and small businesses.

Our city has the reputation of being one of the best book cities in the country. Since Mel Hurtig's first bookstore, the independents, including the excellent second hand stores has established locations on and around Jasper Avenue and Whyte Avenue - in the heart of the city. One could say they are the heart of the city. Chains have proliferated into the malls and in the outskirts. Now we have the superchains moving into periphery, first on the south flank, with three planned forays in other directions. Is this a war? I don't know but it seems to me that independent community centered bookstores are more important than they have ever been.

Ten years ago the main market share of bookstores was in the hands of the independents. Now the numbers are reversed, with chains controlling the bulk of the retail industry. The August 12 edition of the New York Times reported that Grove Press approached Barnes and Noble for its opinion of a forthcoming title by Jerry Leiber. Barnes and Noble responded with "a tepid response". I.e., an order for 1,200 copies, at which point the title was cancelled. Is the day now upon us when a few buyers from a few superchains are determining what is to be published? As the chains gain a larger share of the marketplace, they are gaining a larger say in what is published. Harper Collins has cancelled 100 forthcoming titles from its lists, many of them because not enough copies were ordered in advance to please the publishers bottom line. But it's not just new titles, which are affected. Backlist titles seem to be disappearing with alarming frequency, declared out of print - titles by Judy Grahn, Jane Bowles - all so Jay Leno can get a \$4 million advance for a nonbook to be featured in every superchain in North America? Are we seeing fewer titles being published, but in larger quantities?

Carol Seajay of the Feminist Bookstore News has pointed out that in the U.S., the expansion of superstores (with direct aid from the larger publishers) has not translated into more book sales, but into a diffusion of sales, with books being used as wallpaper for these huge stores, resulting in huge returns to the publishers, in some cases as high as 70%. Here in Canada, this situation has meant problems for some bookstores, as Harper Collins earlier decided to stop shipping books to independent "not chains" whose returns were over 40%. And in the U.S., again reported in The Feminist Bookstore News, Macmillan has recently announced that it will no longer do business with stores with whom they do less than \$10,000/year (no exceptions for special orders) - eliminating many independents in a single sweep. Translation: an increasingly inefficient book industry is foisting the blame for its inefficiencies onto the smaller independents.

Let's talk about the EPOCH Project Fundraiser.

In conjunction with Fennel Productions, we're sponsoring a fundraiser for Ms. T on Thursday, October 23, 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. in the upstairs dining room at the University of Alberta Faculty Club. Tickets are \$50 regular and \$35 low income, available at Orlando Books. Price includes dinner, good entertainment, and chances at prizes.

EPOCH stands for Effecting Policy and Practice Outcomes for children and their households, and is committed to ensuring that all children and all families are treated with respect and dignity.

Ms T. is the foster mother who, despite her advanced level classification and exemplary record, is being denied more foster children because she is in a lesbian relationship. In January, Social Services Minister Stockwell Day wrote, "it is the department's position to place children for whom we are responsible in traditional families. Therefore we are not approving non traditional homes as foster homes."

In Ms. T's words, "the inherent assumptions underlining this policy and practice speak to the devaluing of family diversity" and to conferring a superior status upon heterosexual couples. The message sent to all Albertans is that gay and lesbian persons do not deserve the respect and right to be judged on the basis of relevant considerations only. This further perpetuates and sanctions the discrimination and violence directed at gay and lesbian persons.

Like the Delwyn Vriend case, this is another example of this government's denial of human rights to gays and lesbians.

In September, Ms T's legal counsel is filing an Originating Notice for a Judicial Review at the Court of Queen's Bench. This fundraiser is being organized to help offset the legal costs of litigation.

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